

# FOUR CAUGHT IN MONSTER TAX SWINDLE

Prisoners Accused by District-Attorney Jerome of Impersonating Property Owners in Swearing Off Taxes.

PAID FOR WORK OF FRAUD.

One of the Men Arrested Is Philip Baer, Librarian of the City Hall, and a Friend of Doblin.

In the arrest of four men to-day District-Attorney Jerome declared that he had secured the perpetrators to one of the biggest swindles ever practiced in New York.

The alleged swindlers made the Tax Office their basis of operation in impersonating bona-fide tax-payers and swearing off personal taxes in the interests of the real tax-payer, who paid for the deception.

The District-Attorney, hearing of the plot, assigned W. K. Seord, one of his county detectives, to "stand in" with the gang. He was taken by one of its members to the Tax Office, where he impersonated a Maiden lane jeweller, and in the interests of the latter swore off the personal tax.

Got Pay From the Gang. Then the tool received his pay from the gang. The money was paid over to him in the presence of concealed witnesses, and the District-Attorney says the evidence is conclusive.

The four men arrested are Walter S. Sawyer, Nathan Stringer, and his brother, Moses, who reside at No. 95 West One Hundredth street. They were arraigned in the Centre Street Court late to-day, and the Stringer brothers were held in \$4,000 bail each. Sawyer was held in \$1,000 bail for examination. The men are charged with subornation of perjury.

The fourth man arrested is Philip Baer, the librarian of the City Hall.

How Fraud Was Worked. The plan of the gang, said the District-Attorney, was to secure the names of a taxpayer from the books through the inartificiality of the man on the inside.

When a member of the gang would approach the tax-payer, tell him that through certain influences he could be relieved of paying the tax imposed by the department.

The swindlers represented themselves as officials of the Tax Department. The District-Attorney has knowledge of hundreds of cases in which the tax-payer paid the gang well for the service rendered.

"I am aware," said the District-Attorney, when making the application for the holding of the men, "that the scheme of swindling has been in progress for many years, and that hundreds of tax-payers have contributed to the gang's success."

"I know of one man who through the machinations of the gang was enabled to swear off a personal tax of \$800,000. That was the biggest of the many individual swindles. They range down to \$25,000," said the District-Attorney.

## WEATHER FORECAST

Forecast for the thirty-six hours ending at 9 P. M. Wednesday for New York City and vicinity: Cloudy and warmer, with fog to-night; rain late to-night; rain and fog Wednesday; light to fresh south to east winds.

# DEVEERY EARLY AT THE POLLS.

Sits on a Coffin Box and Surprises the Police Coming on Duty for the Election of a State Senator.

PROUD HE IS A BRAVE.

As Devery Asks His Lieutenants to Hustle He Pays His Respects to the Highbinders on Fourteenth Street—Whom Does He Mean?

Policemen going on watch at the polling place in the undertaking shop at No. 296 Ninth avenue before daylight to-day, discovered a corpulent man sitting on a coffin box at the edge of the sidewalk. He was wrapped in deep thought and a long overcoat. "Hello, Sports," said the man on the coffin box, "you're a little late. I've been here for about an hour."

The policemen recognized the voice and instinctively they saluted. The owner of the voice was William S. Devery, Tammany leader of the Ninth Assembly District. He talked with the policemen until the election officers came around, and then cast the first vote in the contest of ballots to choose a successor to the late Senator Trainor, of the Sixteenth Senate District.

Devery had been up all night. To the bed for Bill. After casting his vote Devery went to his home in West Twenty-eighth street and retired. He had cast the first vote and he left the rest to his lieutenants. "I want all you men to get busy for Peter J. Dooley," he told his followers last night. "As soon as Dooley found out that Justice Leventritt had declared me the real leader of the Ninth District he sent me a check for \$250."

Pouf for the Highbinders. "You people have been vindicated in the Supreme Court. Justice Leventritt said that the highbinders down in Fourteenth street can't dictate to the voters of the Ninth who they shall have for their leader. I'm your leader and I want you to do what I tell you. Get out and hustle for Dooley, even if we did fight against him in the nominating convention."

Perhaps it was because Devery's men remained up so late last night. At any rate, there was very little hustling being done in the Ninth District up to late afternoon. The polling places were deserted.

Trapped the Saloon Men. In view of the fact that there was no particular interest in the election the saloon-keepers of the district made no attempt to live up to the law requiring all saloons within a quarter of a mile of a polling-place to close on Election Day. Word of the saloon-keepers did not know it was election day.

The eagle eye of Capt. Schmittberger spotted the offenders and he sent his plain clothes men to the saloons. They brought in ten saloon men, all of whom were released in the Police Court. Word of the saloon-keepers did not know it was election day.

Reginald, Long Sought by District-Attorney Jerome, Coming Within Reach of a Subpoena.

(Special to The Evening World.) NEWPORT, R. I., Jan. 27.—Reginald Vanderbilt, supposed to be bound for New York, left here to-day. He was accompanied by Mrs. Alfred G. Vanderbilt. It was reported that if Jerome's subpoena was still in force he would accept service and leave the rest to his lawyers.

It was further stated that young Vanderbilt had tired of his exile at Oakland and had decided to end it, especially as his mother, Mrs. Cornelius Vanderbilt, was returning from abroad and he would be expected to meet her. However, his wedding-day was far away and he cannot be further embarrassed in arranging for it.

With the departure of Reginald from Oakland, it is for the first time in many weeks clear of guests. All have gone to New York to meet Mrs. Vanderbilt, who is returning from abroad. The whole party is expected back here Saturday.

WHISTLING BOY COMMITTED. A Youngster Can't Be Sane and Make All the Noise Dave Does.

David Dunn, the fourteen-year-old boy, of No. 559 West Forty-fourth street, who was committed to the Bellevue Hospital from the Children's Court on Jan. 22 to be examined as to his sanity, was sent to the Manhattan State Hospital to-day.

He was committed at the request of his brother-in-law, who complained that young Dave had been whistling almost continuously for a week. He was hospitalized in the Children's Court he annoyed every one with his whistling, interrupted with vocal selections of popular songs.

Twelve Luncheon and Breakfast. The Pennsylvania Special makes a daily trip from New York to Chicago. Paired equipment.

# JAIL FOR LIFE THE FATE OF COL. LYNCH

Home Secretary, Acting Upon King Edward's Suggestion, Commutes the Sentence of the Boer Fighter.

PUBLIC PRESSURE FELT.

Believed Now that Prisoner in Deference to the Expressed Sympathy of the World Will Be Released in a Few Years.

LONDON, Jan. 27.—Col. Arthur Lynch, convicted of high treason, has had the death sentence commuted to one of imprisonment for life. By the terms of his sentence he is condemned to penal servitude. Inasmuch as the prevailing sentiment of the civilized world has been so aroused over the case of Col. Lynch, it is believed that he will be granted a pardon, with leave to get out of the country, in a few years.

It was not expected that Col. Lynch's case would be decided upon so quickly. He was not found guilty until last February, and arrangements were being made in the United States and Australia, as well as in Ireland, to take measures to secure a commutation of the sentence of death, which conviction for high treason invariably carries with it.

Whatever may have been the sentiment of the Government, it is doubtless true that these movements in other countries in Col. Lynch's behalf had a great deal to do with the decision in his favor. It is not likely that such a prompt decision would have been reached had it not been for outside pressure.

Just what the effect of the commutation of Col. Lynch's sentence will be is a matter of discussion in England. The radicals assert that it is a temporizing measure that cannot fail to have a bad effect with the Irish people. Those who are disposed to recognize the claims of Ireland to say that it shows that the Government is disposed to be fair. Irishmen in London believe that it is a recognition of the growing strength of their cause.

May Come to America. The movement set on foot in various sections of the world for the relief of Col. Lynch is likely to take a turn now looking to his release in the near future. It is not unlikely that he will go to the United States if the Government decides to allow him his freedom.

Col. Lynch, who was born in Australia of Irish parents, had been in South Africa for some time previous to the outbreak of the Boer war. He was instrumental in the formation of the Second Irish Brigade, and his name was signed to a number of circulars calling upon Irishmen in Cape Colony to take up arms against the British Government.

After the treaty of peace had been signed the people of Galway elected Col. Lynch to serve as their representative in Parliament. He was advised by his friends that it would be dangerous for him to return to this country, but he professed to believe that the amnesty extended to the South African rebels embraced him. In addition, he claimed to have become a naturalized citizen of the Boer republics.

His people insisted that he should return and take his seat. He remained in Paris for some time, finally deciding to come to London and take his chances of arrest. Immediately upon landing he was arrested, charged with high treason.

IRISHMEN TO SEEK PARDON FOR LYNCH.

New York Irishmen are not entirely satisfied with the commutation of Col. Lynch's sentence to life imprisonment at penal servitude. Roderick J. Kennedy, Chairman of the committee called to consider the project of holding a mass meeting to protest against Col. Lynch's conviction, said this afternoon: "The commutation of Col. Lynch's sentence is not a surprise to us, but we do not consider it sufficient. We did not think that England would put him to death, but a sentence to penal servitude for life amounts to about the same thing."

"If Col. Lynch is put in an English prison and compelled to work as prisoners sentenced to penal servitude are obliged to, he will be dead in a short time. We do not think it just that this should be done. Our efforts will be bent now to secure a further reduction of Col. Lynch's sentence."

"It is our idea that he should not have been put in high prison at all. We think that he was picked out and that an effort has been made to make an example of him simply because he is an Irishman."

The committee appointed at the St. James House on Sunday night will continue to work for his speedy release.

Fast Travel Facilitates Business. The Pennsylvania Special leaves New York every day. Stock reports and a stenographer on board.

# AMBASSADOR M'CORMICK'S COURT DRESS THAT AMAZES RUSSIANS.



Montesquiou - Fezensac Had Dreamed of Embodying a Tom-Tom Funeral Dirge in Clothes, and Now Another's Done It.

(Special to The Evening World.) WASHINGTON, Jan. 27.—The State Department has word that sartorial artists from all over Europe are flocking to St. Petersburg to feast their eyes upon the wonderful court suit of our Ambassador, Robert S. McCormick, formerly of Chicago.

Up to the time of Mr. McCormick's departure it had been the custom of our diplomatic representatives to wear only civilian dress unless they were connected with the army or navy, though Clifton R. Breckinridge wore silk hose and knickerbockers at the czar's coronation. But Mr. McCormick has changed all that. He first burst upon the startled St. Petersburgers in all his Chicago glory at an after-breakfast reception, when he wore the following wonder clothes: A cocked hat, parenthetically described in the cable despatches as a dream, fashioned from the front and back to the apex with golden rosettes with ribbons attached, such as are awarded at dog and horse shows.

A row of golden stars, as big as seven-year-old star fish, circled his collar, while from each a great golden steamship hawser dropped over the Chicago chest and shoulders and back. Those in the back were caught up under the arms and looped in true lover's knot in front.

No coat like that was ever seen in a European court, so the communication says. The sleeves from the wrist to the elbow were circled with great ridges of gold braid, while on the upper part of the sleeves were attached fanciful figures in Japanese gold embroidery, representing the dodo bird, the great auk and other mythical items of natural history.

Mr. McCormick is originally from Chicago. He is the son of a wealthy manufacturer. He is about fifty years old and well-known in literary circles. He was formerly Ambassador

# WOMAN AFLAME RAN ABOUT STORE

Dodged Clerks in Agonized Rush Until She Finally Fell Burned From Head to Foot, While Her Screams Caused Panic.

Scores of Brooklyn shoppers were thrown into a semi-panic to-day when an ambulance surgeon carried from No. 571 Fulton street a woman screaming with pain, who was so badly burned that she will probably die.

No. 571 Fulton street is in the heart of the shopping district. The injured woman is Mrs. Fanny White, of No. 86 Carlton avenue. She is employed in a big haberdashery as a seamstress.

At noon the girls in the store were boiling coffee over a gas stove. Mrs. White's gown caught fire and she ran screaming through the store. Salesmen, girls and floorwalkers tried to catch her, but she was so wild that their efforts were in vain until she was so badly burned that she fell to the floor.

Bath robes, blankets and everything else handy in the stock were used to smother the flames.

An ambulance was called from the Brooklyn Hospital. Somebody turned in a fire alarm simultaneously. The engine, ambulance and a wagon-load of policemen dashed through the shopping district all at the same time.

Women crowded to the fire lines that the police had established. Some fainting when they heard the shrieks of Mrs. White as she was carried out to the ambulance on a stretcher.

The ambulance surgeon said that she had been burned from head to foot and that there was not a patch of skin on her body unburned that could not be covered with a 10-cent piece.

All the way to the hospital Mrs. White shrieked with pain.

There is little hope for her recovery. Her skin grafting is resorted to here will be the most interesting case that has come before the Kings County Medical Society in years.

# JEROME SAYS TAX SWINDLE WILL REACH INTO MILLIONS

Late developments in the Tax Department swindle indicate that the gang has been in operation for years. The District-Attorney declared that the city had been swindled out of millions of dollars. Philip Baer, Librarian of the City Hall, who is one of the prisoners, lives in Tax Commissioner Strassburger's district and is well known to the Republican leader. Philip Doblin, the self-confessed perjurer, who testified that Lemuel Ely Quigg induced him to offer a bribe of \$5,000 to Congressman Lessler, is a warm personal friend of Baer.

LATE RESULTS AT NEW ORLEANS. Fifth Race—Floyd K. 1, Mosketo 2, Peat 3. Sixth Race—Ahumada 1, Marshal Niel 2, Benson Caldwell.

GAS KILLS SALOON-KEEPER.

Joseph Smith, thirty-five years old, the owner of the saloon at 102 Centre street, was asphyxiated by gas in his room, at No. 117 Leonard street, where he boarded, to-day, the gas burner having been accidentally left open. Cornelius Fitzsimmons, twenty-seven years old, Smith's brother-in-law, who was sleeping in an adjoining room, was overcome by the gas, but recovered.

At 2 o'clock a lodger in the house named Frederick Herman told Mrs. Flight that he smelled gas coming from the room where the men were. Herman and the landlady broke open the door and found Smith lying dead in bed. Fitzsimmons was on the floor of the above unconscious.

Policeman O'Rourke, of the Elizabeth street station, was notified and Coroner Jackson was also called. The Coroner is a physician and he managed to revive Fitzsimmons.

Mrs. Flight said that Smith was in the habit of going to sleep with the gas turned low in his room, and it is believed that the flame was accidentally blown out, allowing the gas to escape.

# VERDICT IN LESSLER CASE IS DUE TO-NIGHT

Whitewash Will Probably Be Applied to Both Quigg and the Man Who Accused Some One of Trying to Bribe Him—No One Will Be Held Responsible.

Examination Develops Bitterness Between Representatives Wheeler and Roberts, Questioner Seeking to Establish Latter Congressman's Interest in Holland Submarine Boat Company.

Special to The Evening World. WASHINGTON, Jan. 27.—With Lessler's "lie direct" for Doblin before the Naval Affairs Investigating Committee, the inquiry into the alleged Holland boat bribery case reached its last stage to-day.

It is understood that the Committee will announce its verdict in the Lessler case to-night. The findings will be that a bribe was offered to Lessler by Doblin, but that no credence can be placed in Doblin's testimony, and that Quigg's connection with any improper action has not been shown.

This is the view taken by a majority of the members of the Committee, who wanted early to-day to drop the investigation where it was.

When the investigating committee resumed to-day Representative Lessler was recalled to the stand.

"I desire to deny as unequivocally false the statements made here yesterday by the witness Doblin," he said. He then explained how he came

to send the telegram "to keep this confidential." He said the matter was then before the sub-committee, and there was a desire to keep it secret.

"Doblin came to my hotel," said Lessler, "and I told him I had told the committee of the whole submarine boat business. 'That's terrible; that's terrible,' he said. I said to him to keep up his nerve, that all he had to do was to tell the truth before the committee."

Lessler then repeated his story of his movements that morning. He said he had breakfasted with Doblin; that Doblin had told him he was politically ruined.

"I felt for Doblin's serious position and went in to see the Speaker, and it was agreed that Doblin's statement should not be made public. I then went to the Capitol and telephoned my secretary to bring Doblin up. I was not present when Doblin was examined and know nothing of what transpired with Doblin."

"I wired Doblin to come here. Doblin wanted to go home after his testimony and we went together. There was little talked of. He said something about the law as to his immunity. There was little said about it. I never saw him from the time he got to New York until he reappeared here yesterday."

"I want to deny the statement of Supt. McCullagh that I said there was but one member of this Committee 'I could trust.' It is untrue."

During his examination of Mr. Lessler, Representative Butler insisted on referring to Doblin as "Joblin."

"I had no conversation with Doblin as to what he was to tell the sub-

committee," said Lessler. "I was alone with Doblin when I told him he had to go before the committee. After breakfast my secretary was present. I was alone with Doblin in a cab driving to my hotel later in the day."

Questioned by Representative Rixey, Lessler said: "I always believed Doblin to be a warm personal friend and one willing to do anything to further my interests. He was employed about the County Court, where many things of a confidential nature are given out."

"I am at a loss to understand what he did yesterday."

"I did not want to have Doblin's name given to the press because I did not want him to be rounded by the people in New York with whom he had political relations."

WHY HE MARKED IT CONFIDENTIAL. Questioned by Representative Kitching, Lessler said he marked his telegram to Doblin "confidential" because he regarded the entire matter as secret while pending before the sub-committee.

"I told Foss, Dayton and others that an attempt had been made to bribe me," said Lessler. "I told each of them that. Foss and Dayton were together when I told them. I thought it was before Christmas, but it has since been fixed as between Dec. 12 and Jan. 1."

"I first made up my mind to inform the Committee when I did so. It came right out."

Doblin in his testimony said Lessler told him he had "blurted it out."

"Doblin has been a very useful man in New York," continued Lessler. "He has been used by them, and when through with him they throw him away like a dish rag. I wanted to show him I was grateful for his work. He is under no obligation to me."

"I never recommended him to McCullagh. He had no right to ask me